

ACTION P-00

UNCLASSIFIED RELEASED IN PART ^{E3}

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INFO	LOG-00	EEB-00	AF-00	AID-00	AMAD-00	AEX-00	ACQ-00
	CIAE-00	COME-00	CPR-00	INL-00	DNI-00	DODE-00	DS-00
	UTED-00	VCI-00	DIAS-00	H-00	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00
	LAB-01	ARMY-00	MOFM-00	MOF-00	VCIE-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00
	OES-00	OMB-00	NIMA-00	EPAU-00	PA-00	PER-00	GIWI-00
	TRSE-00	FMP-00	R-00	EPAE-00	SCRS-00	DSCC-00	PRM-00
	DRL-00	G-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00	FA-00	SWCI-00	SEEE-00

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INFO ECOWAS COLLECTIVE

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DEPT PLEASE PASS TO P STAFF

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: EFIN, EPET, OVIP, PREL, PGOV, PHUM, LI

SUBJECT: UNDER SECRETARY BURNS' APRIL 21, 2010 CLOSED MEETING WITH
LIBERIAN PRESIDENT ELLEN JOHNSON SIRLEAF

1. (U) April 21, 2010; 9:30 a.m.; Monrovia, Liberia.

2. (U) Participants:

U.S.

Under Secretary William Burns (P)

Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield (Notetaker)

LIBERIA

President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf

Edward McClain, Minister of State (Notetaker)

3. (SBU) SUMMARY. In a very cordial thirty-minute meeting, Under Secretary Burns discussed a wide range of bilateral and regional issues with President Sirleaf. Sirleaf warmly welcomed Burns to Liberia. Also present in the meeting were Ambassador Thomas-Greenfield and Minister of State Edward McClain. END SUMMARY.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: APPEALS REVIEW PANEL
APPEAL ACTION: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION RELEASED
REASON(S): B4
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: CHARLES L DARIS
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HIPC COMPLETION AND LIBERIA'S DEBT

4. (SBU) In response to an inquiry from Burns, Sirleaf said that Liberia was making efforts to revitalize the economy following last year's economic downturn. Negotiations with companies were being reinvigorated, but Liberia was very conscious of the need to carefully self-manage its resources. Sirleaf noted that the IMF had advised her that Liberia would reach HIPC Completion Point. However, she was surprised to learn of an additional \$150 million in bilateral debt owed to three European countries (including Belgium, France and the Netherlands) that fell outside the Paris Club. In addition, Sirleaf has been told by the IMF that the \$20 million owed to vulture funds will be brought to closure.

SIRLEAF'S APRIL 19 MEETING WITH CHEVRON

5. (SBU) Sirleaf told Burns that her April 19 meeting with Chevron President for Latin American and African Exploration and Production Ali Moshiri went well. The president and Chevron discussed two problematic issues.

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The second problem Chevron raised dealt with an audit reporting that bribes were allegedly paid to legislators by the National Oil Company of Liberia to ensure ratification of concessionary blocks for Broadway and Oranto.

Sirleaf stressed that she will not nullify the existing contracts, despite a recommendation by the General Auditing Commission to do so.

U.S. HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT AND ELECTIONS

6. (SBU) Sirleaf expressed her disappointment with the 2009 Country Report on Human Rights Practices for Liberia. She admitted that the report was accurate in terms of the justice sector and corruption. The president noted, however, that we did not highlight what has

been achieved. Sirleaf said she is doing everything she can to deal with corruption and is working to address issues of employment, which are the two issues she believes the opposition will raise during the election. She described the next election as

a defining moment for Liberia's progress. It must be free of violence and it must be fair.

7. (SBU) U/S Burns said that the U.S. does not underestimate the challenges faced by Liberia in building democratic institutions and rule of law. But we will continue to be candid in expressing our concern, and supportive of the government's efforts to make progress.

8. (SBU) The Electoral Threshold Bill is a major problem, Sirleaf continued. She expects the National Legislature will come to agreement on a version for her signature by next week, but, in the meantime, she encouraged the National Elections Commission to do everything it can to ensure the 2011 election occurs on schedule.

SIRLEAF'S REGIONAL DIPLOMACY

9. (SBU) Sirleaf offered her views on the region and her own recent diplomacy. On Nigeria, she described Goodluck Jonathan as having "measured up." Nigerians are looking forward to their presidential election, contestants are coming out, and Sirleaf sees former leader Ibrahim Babangida as a strong candidate. The president was asked by the Libyans to negotiate a rapprochement with the Nigerians following Qaddafi's statement that Nigerian should be split into two states, giving the north to Muslims and the south to Christians. She described the negotiations as extremely complicated and noted that more time was needed before a rapprochement could be reached. While in Nigeria with the Libyan delegation, Nigerian Senator David Mark called Qaddafi a "mad man" and Qaddafi responded by saying Nigeria should be broken up according to all its ethnic groups. On Zimbabwe, she said the international community must continue to support the people of Zimbabwe. She does not see Mugabe giving up power. Cote d'Ivoire, according to Sirleaf, is calm. Gbagbo is a skillful politician and he will not agree to have elections until he knows can win.

10. (SBU) Under Secretary Burns conveyed to the President, greetings from President Obama and Secretary Clinton. He expressed U.S. continued commitment and support for Liberia's democracy. He noted the importance of building institutions that promote democracy.

11. (U) This message has been cleared by Under Secretary Burns.
THOMAS-GREENFIELD

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